

past. The questions that Katrina opened still have not been answered, and, as long as they remain unresolved, a spectre will haunt American society. Whether Katrina

complicated, because they fear the truth that the dreams reveal. The truth that demonstrates the relationship between their dreams and the brutal reality of the Nazi

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and enabled them to be solved is a question that can only be answered in the future.

Matej Mikašinović-Komšo  
Faculty of Political Sciences,  
University of Zagreb

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#### Review

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### Charlotte Beradt **Snovi pod Trećim Reichom**

Disput, Zagreb, 2015, 116 pp.

Humans are differentiated from other beings by their superior mind and creativity. The book *Snovi pod Trećim Reichom* (*The Third Reich of Dreams*) by Charlotte Beradt shows the dreams that were dreamt by the citizens of Germany from 1933 until 1939, when the author emigrated to England. Before examining the dreams, and their meaning, the author explains how the dreams examined in the book are not regular dreams about violence and fear, but dreams filled with political motives, alienation, feelings of emptiness and loss of identity. Although the meaning of the dreams is clear, their dreamers still try to find alternative explanations, sometimes more complicated and sometimes less

waking worlds. What is similar to all the dreams is the sense of the coming storm that affected Germany. They told of things yet to come and have better emphasised the threat the regime posed than reality ever could.

Depending on the nature of the individual, the dreams would be different – some would succumb to the regime while others would oppose Hitler and his horrendous regime. It is important to note how the political system influenced the individual. How, depending on the methods of indoctrination by the media, the type of dreams would change as well on many levels. The indoctrination's mere presence had a significant influence on the course of the dreams. Also, it could have a varying effect on dreams, making them more intrusive or vivid depending on the potency of the methods applied.

The relationship between the individual and the community is discussed as well because everyone wanted to belong. To note, even though the dreams analysed were individual in nature, the author herself states how they could easily be grouped – i.e. the phenomenon observed was present on a social level significantly higher than that of an individual. Because of this desire to belong no one wanted to believe in the real possibility of the horrors that the dreams foreshadowed. For one hopes that sleep will bring about fairer things than nightmares. The dreams interpreted through the book were all dreamt before the Nazi re-

gime revealed its true form, based on the events that the dreamers experienced in their lives, but could not be interpreted in the given moment. And when they could have been, it was already too late.

When describing *The Third Reich of Dreams* it is necessary to name cultural trauma as a phenomenon that can affect individuals, small groups or communities. Sometimes it is shared through generations and can have an impact on the formation of new generations that did not experience the traumatic event. In that process the identification of the victims, the sense of responsibility and collected memory are important, not only on an individual basis, but also as a group in order to prevent similar future events. Cultural trauma shows individuals can be part of a whole, i.e. part of a collective identity. There is no sphere of life that cultural trauma does not intrude upon. Society is vulnerable, which allows cultural trauma to happen. Almost every nation has something traumatic that can be considered as cultural trauma (Stamm et al., 2003: 94-95). In this reviewer's opinion, a clear indicator of cultural trauma could be the unconscious of the individuals, taken into consideration as a whole in order to judge society's grief.

The first three chapters, "Envelopment of the private person or 'A life without walls'", "Bureaucratic ghost stories or 'I look forward to nothing'" and "Everyday life by night or 'So as not to understand my own words'", tell of the loss of joy, the feeling of vulnerability under the everyday surveillance that the repressive regime practiced on its citizens. These elements could be observed in the content of the dreams, whether the walls would dis-

appear or household items would testify against their owner for their lack of faith towards the regime. The feeling of public humiliation that the dreamers felt was an important element, whether the setting was a theatre or a dreamer's own factory. Their dreams were filled with a huge amount of legal ordinance, just like in the future years of the regime, in which they would often be told of places where they couldn't be found. The dreamers often created imaginary institutions and restrictive bureaucracy themselves, while at the same time transforming real life propaganda slogans into dream versions that led their dream activities. The media itself helped contribute to the strengthening of the political system and its entrenchment in the everyday life of civilians. In the chapter "Everyday life by night or 'So as not to understand my own words'" one can feel the fear of expressing what was really happening because of the possibility of legal retribution, which is why the dreamers always dreamt about being observed and speaking in alien languages as a way of escaping from themselves.

In the next two chapters, "The non-hero or 'And I don't say a word'" and "The choir or 'Nothing to be done here'", the lack of assistance and the lack of change are discussed in the dreams. In one dream it is strangers and women that oppose the pointless regulations of sending mail, which invokes shame and discomfort in the male dreamer who did not oppose the regulation. Another man who writes a complaint about the political system on his own typewriter puts an empty piece of paper in an envelope. In another dream the same man calls the police and makes a complaint about himself, not the political

system. In the chapter “The choir or ‘Nothing to be done here’” there are feelings of shunning and loathing loved ones, whether they be Jewish mothers or some other relatives, as seen in a student’s dream in which her Jewish ex-boyfriend was attacked and she didn’t offer him help.

The chapter “The emancipation of doctrines or ‘The dark-haired in the Reich of blondes’” shows the difference between males and females based on the focus on physical appearance, which affected females more. Because of the country’s racial laws and regulations about blonde hair and blue eyes, women that did not meet these standards dreamt of being chased because of their large noses (a supposedly common Jewish physical trait), which is why they had to prove that they were not Jewish. In some dreams classes were divided based on hair colour while in others, blonde children would tell female dreamers with non-blonde hair that they did not belong to German society. The elements discussed here show clear signs of division, the aspiration to belong, whether that group was blonde or not. The dreamers that acted against the regime in reality recreated the same events in their dreams, which were often filled with adventure, full of running away from the police. In the dreams they even offered more resistance. The author notes that their own image in the mirror remained unchanged and that they opposed the political system in their dreams as much as in reality. It is no wonder that the chapter’s title is “Persons who act or ‘Where there’s a will, there’s a way’”, because the dreamers could jump over balconies, run endlessly, and never give up, no matter the difficulties, and create riots.

“Hidden wishes or ‘Last stop: Heil’” tells us about conformism and the desire to conform and belong to a group. Dreamers often dreamt about being rejected by their surroundings, avoided, and thrown out from their houses if they expressed discomfort while shouting “Sieg Heil”. A man tells of a dream in which he finds himself in a train station, refusing to collect funds for Nazis, but then Hitler arrives dressed as a clown gossiping with women and having fun with children. When the man finally asks himself if Hitler is really that bad and if he should really try to be against him and the regime, he notices that he is holding in his hand a box for collecting funds. Through slow but efficient indoctrination, different methods and approaches, conformity of the dreamer is accomplished. This results in people wanting to join something that they mocked before because they do not want to find themselves alone, like being stranded on a desert island.

That which doesn’t surprise the reader is the connection the author makes between the influence of power and sex appeal. In their dreams many women dreamt about subconscious sexual desires towards Hitler, which is why the chapter is titled “Unhidden wishes or ‘We want him by our side’”. They sometimes dreamt that they had a huge influence on him, that they were admired by the SS troops because of it, while others dreamt of holding their hands in a specific gesture that symbolised Hitler’s devotion to a person. Others even dreamt of dancing with him in the street and celebrating. Their inner wishes of belonging and participating in this society were revealed in their dreams, be the dreamers male or female.

The final chapter collects the dreams Jews dreamt until 1939. Even in that period, when the most brutal terror towards Jews still had not begun, one can observe the Jews' sense of infirmity, fear, and visions of untold atrocities that were yet to come in the later years. The sense of not belonging and of alienation can be felt through the dreams where the dreamers do not wish to speak any other language except German and in which they find it impossible to adjust to their surroundings. A woman married to a Jew dreamt of losing their home and place in society, after which they were forced to wander and hide, abandoned from society. The "Prophet Dream" of a man traveling to the only remaining state that tolerates Jews, dreamt in 1935, shows what would come to be a few years later. All that happened to the Jews was devastating for every fragment of their being and this analysis points towards how this regime established itself inside individuals. A man dreamt of how he did not sit on the specified bench for Jews, but sat between two benches on a trash can. After that he placed a sign saying "If need be, I'll relinquish my spot to the refuse", which portrays the horrors of dehumanisation that individuals and groups experienced. The chapter "The Jews who dream or 'If need be, I'll relinquish my spot to the refuse'" ends with the dream of a later date, in which a young dreamer dreams that she is not able to recognize the threat before it grows to huge proportions, and serves as a criticism of society, both past and present.

From the aforementioned we can conclude that the Third Reich was a cultural trauma for Germans and everyone under the Nazi regime. It influenced German

culture through new generations and had much more influence on the whole world than any other event in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This book shows how, on an individual basis, cultural trauma can affect people, even through dreams. Many details in those dreams show the greatest fears that came true in the later years of Hitler's regime. The details of people whose dreams were collected show us how media and propaganda can affect parts of our consciousness, which we think are untouchable. Not even in their dreams were people safe from the regime. They dreamt about what was bothering them, but they could not even think that some of their worst dreams would come true. The author's work is unique because of its simple vocabulary and clear emotions that we can feel through the dreams of the book's subjects. Through their dreams she showed us how threatening political processes can affect individuals. And what transpired as a result of those dreams can be considered an almost unconscious manifestation of said trauma that connected the level of the individual with the level of the collective, i.e. although the dreams were very detailed, because of the possibility of gravitating towards a group they showed how cultural trauma can transfer from the individual to the collective.

Through law and authority we can notice some elements of Lacan's philosophy in the form of the Other. In the Third Reich the Führer was the great Other that provided laws and made completely new sets of rules for society (Johnston, 2013). All the dreams about walls, laws and various kinds of surveillance show us how authority can affect human lives, even if it was impossible for that period to have

such developed technology. The sense of being observed was shared by many people of that time, creating ever-present paranoia. Their dreams showed all the emotional responses that could manifest in the conscious area, a clear sign of a creeping cultural trauma that affected society on both individual and collective levels.

Charlotte Beradt shows us that, even at first glance, clear and concise dreams can have political messages that reflect the real situation of the moment. All the small details show us how regular people that didn't have any political function could feel real danger. Regular people are the basis of every society, which is why the focus of political research should invoke even the unconscious sphere of their life. Dreams reflect all that was happening during the day and how the brain processes information in its own specific way. The author criticizes how difficult it is to discover and prevent such movements in society. Through new technology it is easier to influence the masses and create inhuman conditions.

As for the book's literary value, it is certainly more than just a dream journal of other people's nightmares. It must be acknowledged that those same dreams do not belong to a cohesive group or social class, but to a wide range of individuals from all spheres of life. And the fact that they shared something so individual by nature as dreams is worthy of studying.

The creativity and grim nature of what was dreamt implies a lot about the human unconscious and how it can affect one's thought processes. The mere notion that our repressed fears can manifest themselves while we sleep is disturbing enough – but that they could also become

ominous predictions of the future is even more so. Those same horrors that were first witnessed by dreamers and later came to be remembered as brutal acts of the Holocaust committed by the Nazi regime, clearly demonstrate humankind's fears as well as the crimes we are capable of committing against our own fellow-man.

And yet, we seldom pay attention to dreams. The reason could be because they are just that – merely dreams and not a definitive form of reality. Even though they are a part of the individual's psyche they demonstrate a clear correlation between him and others like him. Maybe not a collective consciousness, but a collective dreamscape perhaps? For if androids could perchance dream of electric sheep, society could surely dream and – as a whole – envision a Reich yet to come.

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Žaklina Kuljanac  
Faculty of Political Sciences,  
University of Zagreb